

CH>RITY  
CH>LLENGE



TRIP NOTES

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# BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

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CYCLE SRI LANKA  
SRI LANKA

Sat 20 Mar - Sun 28 Mar 2021





## In aid of your choice of charity

20 Mar - 28 Mar 2021

### 9 DAYS | SRI LANKA | CHALLENGING

Be one of the first to sign up to our brand new cycling challenge, an unforgettable bike ride through Sri Lanka's cultural triangle. Starting at the famous Lion Rock in Sigiriya, pedal your way through rice fields, spice regions and tea estates, soaking up the Sri Lankan way of life as you go.

- Cycle over 450km surrounded by spectacular scenery
- Ride through the Spice Region and Tea Estates
- Experience everyday life in rural Sri Lanka
- Climb the impressive Lion Rock in Sigiriya
- Explore some of Sri Lanka's finest temples

## YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

### DAY 1 Sat 20 Mar

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#### Depart UK

It's time to put all your training and hard-work to the test as you depart for Sri Lanka and the start of your challenge.

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### DAY 2 Sun 21 Mar

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#### Arrive and transfer to Sigiriya

After landing at Bandaranayake International Airport, you will transfer (approximately 4 hours) to Sigiriya, where your cycling challenge will begin. After reaching the hotel, you will head out for your bike fitting before sitting down to enjoy your first evening meal in Sri Lanka. You will receive a full trip briefing over dinner, providing you with the perfect opportunity to get to know your cycling team. Be sure to get a good night's rest before your first day in the saddle! (L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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### DAY 3 Mon 22 Mar

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#### Cycle to Polonnaruwa Ruins and climb Lion Rock (approx. 61km)

It's an early start today as you head east from the hotel towards the ruins of Polonnaruwa. Starting off along the quiet backroads of the Sigiriya Nature Reserve, you then join the highway to reach the ruins by lunchtime. After a 2 hour cycle tour of the ruins, you will enjoy a picnic lunch before transferring back to Sigiriya. On arrival, you will have time to freshen up after before spending the afternoon climbing 'Lion's Rock' to gaze out over the magnificent view of the surrounding jungle. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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### DAY 4 Tue 23 Mar

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#### Sigiriya to Kandy (approx. 75km)

After breakfast, you start your cycle from the hotel and wind your way along quiet, scenic roads, taking in the rice and chilli cultivation and man made lakes that surround you. Be sure to keep your eyes peeled for the local birdlife that can often be spotted on these lily-pad covered waterways. The roads will begin to climb as you enter the spice growing region, before you finish your cycling day at Aluviharaya Cave Temple. After visiting the temple complex, you will enjoy a traditional Sri Lankan curry at a local restaurant. From here, you transfer the final 30km by bus and arrive into Kandy where you will have a free afternoon to visit some of the city's main attractions. Alternatively, you can spend the afternoon relaxing before your evening briefing and dinner at the hotel. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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### DAY 5 Wed 24 Mar

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#### Kandy to Nuwara Eliya (approx. 65km)

Today you will face the toughest section of your challenge. After an early breakfast, you transfer 25km to the town of Gampola. From here, you will hop into the saddle and begin your cycle through some of the finest tea estates in the world. After lunch at a tea factory, you will begin the final 20km, ascending almost 2000m to the top, where you will be rewarded with stunning views over the tea plantations below. From here, you descend into Nuwara Eliya, also known as Little England, with plenty of time to unwind with a cup of freshly brewed tea. Tonight you will enjoy a well-earned dinner at your hotel. (B, L, D)

Overnight: Hotel

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#### **DAY 6** Thu 25 Mar

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##### **Nuwara Eliya to Ella (approx. 65km)**

Today starts with a visit to a local tea factory where you can learn how the famous brew is produced. The winding country roads are extremely picturesque, passing terraced fields, colourful Hindu temples and brightly dressed tea pickers. You'll arrive into Ella for a late lunch and have the rest of the day to relax. The local bars are a great place to spend the afternoon, offering magnificent views of the Ella Gap Gorge descending down to the south coast. Tonight's dinner will be at a local restaurant. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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#### **DAY 7** Fri 26 Mar

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##### **Ella to Uda Walawe (approx. 102km)**

Starting from the hotel, today's cycle will see you descending a further 1000m down the Ella Gap towards Uda Walawe National Park. After a leisurely ride, you will reach your hotel by mid-day. This afternoon you will visit the Elephant Transit Home - Sri Lanka's elephant orphanage. Arriving at feeding time, you will see how the elephants are cared for before their reintegration into the wild. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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#### **DAY 8** Sat 27 Mar

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##### **Uda Walawe to Galle (approx. 89km)**

Today is your last day in the saddle! Cycling from your hotel, you will get a real feel for everyday life in Sri Lanka as you ride through small towns and villages. You will be greeted at the finish line with a refreshing celebration beer and a delicious lunch at the coast. After lunch, you will pack up your bike and transfer to the hotel. In the afternoon, there is plenty of time for you to make your own visit to Galle, where you can take a leisurely stroll around the ramparts of the fort. Back at the hotel, your celebration dinner awaits you, the perfect way to end your Charity Challenge expedition. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

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#### **DAY 9** Sun 28 Mar

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### Depart Sri Lanka

This morning it is time to say goodbye to Sri Lanka. A transfer will take you back to Bandaranayake International Airport for your flight back to the UK. (B)

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### NB

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to factors such as flight changes, unusual weather patterns or the strength of the group. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however, we cannot be held responsible for any last-minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

**HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE**

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.  
The costs below are per person.

**SELF FUNDER**

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Pay a registration fee of £395.00 when you book  
Then a balance of £1852.00 (10 weeks before your challenge)  
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

**MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP**

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Registration fee of £395.00 when you book  
Raise a minimum of £3780.00 for your charity.

**FLEXI**

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Registration fee of £395.00 when you book  
Then £395.00 towards challenge costs (10 weeks before your challenge)  
Raise a minimum of £2975.00 for your charity.

**WHAT'S INCLUDED**

**Before you go**

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- Sponsorship forms
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, visa information, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- Warm up exercise routines
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- Fitness training notes
- Fundraising advice

**On your challenge**

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- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Drinking water on challenge days
- A donation to a community project in one of the countries in which we operate
- A contribution towards funding the reduction of carbon emissions through Climate Care’s portfolio of award winning projects
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team
- Equipment as per the challenge activity
- Internal transfers (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- UK-based 24-hour emergency support line
- Bike

**WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED**

**Before you go**

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- Visa (if required)
- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)

**THE DETAILS****On your challenge**

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- Helmet
- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)

**Fundraising deadlines**

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 26/12/2020), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 25/04/2021). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

**Prices include all known air taxes**

We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.

**Typical group size**

The typical group size is 10 - 30 participants

**Small group supplement**

The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 10 participants. We can run this trip with 6-9 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £95. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.

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**Optional extras**

Extensions at end of trip\*  
Single room supplements\*  
Business class upgrades\*  
Travel insurance  
(\*subject to availability)

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**Travel insurance**

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at <https://www.campbellirvine.com/charitychallenge>.

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### Level of Difficulty

Tough: A "tough" Cycle should be undertaken by someone with previous experience and interest in the activity. A tough challenge will test you both physically and mentally. The cycle will be hilly and training is essential.

You can tell your supporters that on your Sri Lanka cycle Challenge you will be:

- Cycling for around 6-8 hours per day, covering approximately 450kms over 6 days.
- Battling the heat and humidity. Temperatures can reach the 30s.
- Taking on the challenging climb to Nuwara Eliya - a 20km uphill cycle.

### Typical Day

You will wake at around 6am, have breakfast and pack your daypack for the next section of the cycle. You will be given enough water for the day and your packed lunch to carry. The rest of your luggage will be transported for you to the next destination. At around 7.30am you will begin the day's cycle, stopping for lunch at a scenic spot around midday. You will be cycling throughout the morning to avoid the midday heat and will usually arrive at your destination by mid-afternoon. In the evening, you will have dinner and a briefing around 7.30pm.

### Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, an advanced and thorough safety management system. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount.

In terms of your Sri Lanka challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The cycling route is exposed at times, and on sunny days the temperatures can soar. You should ideally be wearing sun cream and a cap with a peak (so it can be worn under a helmet) and be hydrating constantly!
- Your challenge will see you cycling on different terrain and road types, from gravelly back-country tracks to sections of busier roads. The road conditions will vary and you should be aware of loose stones and potholes. Your leader will brief you fully before each day.
- Smoke alarms are not a legal requirement in Sri Lanka, and as such some of the hotels we use do not have them in place. Your leader will explain the emergency fire procedures to you.

### Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in

Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

### Extension

If an extension is available for your itinerary, this info will be included on the respective expedition website. If you wish to book an extension, you will need to do so no later than 4 months prior to departure.

### Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow to Colombo Bandaranayake Airport. The flying time is approx 11 hours when flying directly. Once confirmed, your flight info will be available in your Account Area under 'Flights'. Your flight tickets will be emailed to you before your departure.

If you choose to book your own flights please confirm with the Charity Challenge office prior to booking any flights, otherwise you may be liable for your included group flight cost. Contact [flights@charitychallenge.com](mailto:flights@charitychallenge.com) for any further info or intent of booking your own flights. For any general flights questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

### Visa

We will upload a Visa Application Advice document into your account area 3 months prior to your departure. The visa info is per the FCO website where a link will be provided together with a link to the visa office for that country.

The approximate cost of visas for this itinerary is \$35.

### Insurance

It is a condition of travelling with Charity Challenge that you have a suitable travel insurance policy which covers you for your entire challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge.

If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you must complete and return to Charity Challenge prior to travel.

For more travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page or for any specific queries, please contact us at [bookings@charitychallenge.com](mailto:bookings@charitychallenge.com).

## Vaccinations and Medicine

### Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel Health Pro page:

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/204/sri-lanka>

Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting, and as such, it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

### Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad>

## Climate and Terrain

### Climate

The weather in Sri Lanka varies depending on which part of the country you are in. In March, Central (Sigirya) and southern (Galle) Sri Lanka can see temperatures reach the mid-30s. Kandy and the hills of the Tea Country will be a little cooler due to their higher altitude. The monsoon season runs from April to September, but you should still come prepared for showers in March.

The weather in September is more varied and, whilst it is the end of the monsoon season, there is still a chance of showers along the south coast and in the hills of the tea country. Central Sri Lanka usually remains dry, even during the monsoon season, and temperatures will be between 25c and 30c.

### Terrain

You will mainly be cycling on B roads with good tarmac. The ride between Sigiriya and Kandy has a long gravel section. The final 20km between Kandy and Nuwara Eliya is a steady uphill climb on a well-maintained road.

## Training

Training is definitely required. It is important that you work specifically on your stamina, leg and joint strength, and balance in order to get as much out of the challenge as possible. Don't forget that the temperature and climate are different to the UK and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days – the heat and distance will be your

biggest challenge. You need to be able to sustain around 6-8 hours of cycling for 6 continuous days. Replicating this over a weekend would be fantastic training. In your member's area you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes.

### Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more [here](#)

### Luggage Allowance and Valuables

The luggage allowance will depend on the airline we are using for your challenge, but in general it will be one piece of checked baggage at approximately 20kg.

Each cycling day, your personal kit will be transported to the next stop by a support vehicle. You will carry a daypack for your daily needs such as sun cream, lunch, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance, passport, visa etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

We advise that you wear your cycling footwear on the plane and take a set of cycling clothing (especially your jacket) in your hand luggage. In the unlikely event that your hold bag should go missing, you will be able to begin the challenge until you are reunited with your luggage.

### Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support guides and staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

## Group Size

Each group is intended to be 10 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of approx. 30 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 6 to 9 people by charging a small group supplement of £95 which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

## Bikes, clothing and equipment

### Bikes

The bikes are good quality, 27 speed hybrid bikes. They have front suspension, town and country tyres and adjustable stem hydraulic disc brakes. Please indicate your height on your booking form so that we can aim to book the correct size well in advance.

### Clothing and Equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, a helmet is compulsory, and comfortable footwear for your cycle will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some good quality padded cycling shorts. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are a high quality, gore-tex waterproof jacket and technical/Dry fit t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Cycling gloves, and a cotton scarf or buff are also highly recommended to protect you from the dust. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here, and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, cycle surgery, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

## Accommodation and Toilets

### Accommodation

The standard of accommodation in Sri Lanka is generally high. All rooms are en-suite and have facilities for charging batteries and wifi connection. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email [challenges@charitychallenge.com](mailto:challenges@charitychallenge.com)

### Toilets

These range from very basic during the cycling route to normal western standards in the accommodation. There will be en-suite toilet and washing facilities at the hotels. Remember to bring some toilet paper with you as it may be difficult to find during your cycling day.

## Food and Drink

Food in Sri Lanka is a delight with strong influences from India, Indonesia and it's Southeast Asian neighbours. The currys are always freshly prepared, accompanied with rice and vegetables and flavoured with Sri Lanka's famous, locally-produced spices.

Breakfast will usually consist of eggs made to order alongside small local dishes. Lunch will be lighter and usually consist of roti, fried rice and fruit. In the evenings you will be able to try the local curries with rice or a hotel buffet depending on the accommodation.

Clean drinking water will be provided for you while you cycle and there will be opportunities for you to purchase alcoholic and soft drinks to accompany your dinner.

Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies. You will need to be as flexible as possible with your eating habits when travelling in Southeast Asia, as some diets are hard to cater for!

## Money

### Currency

The local currency is the Sri Lankan Rupee. Changing money at the airport is strongly recommended and you will often get the best rate here. ATMs are available at the airport and in Kandy, but they do not always accept international bank cards. Credit cards are becoming more widely accepted, but outside main centres you may find cash the only acceptable currency. It also may be difficult to cash travellers' cheques.

### How much to bring

All accommodation and meals are included within the price of the trip, as well as water during the days of your cycling challenge. You will not need to carry a lot of money with you during the challenge, but as there are opportunities to buy soft drinks, alcohol and snacks on the way we would suggest a maximum of about £15 a day. Remember to bring more if you intend to buy souvenirs as there are plenty of places to pick up gifts along the way.

### Tipping

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. We recommend approx. £10 per person per challenge-day. This should be given to the challenge leader who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks and porters.

### Phone and Wifi

Most of the accommodation you are in will have limited Wi-Fi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this. You will have phone signal in almost all places on the challenge.

### Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling abilities. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. In the event of an emergency, all guides and leaders are maintaining contact via radio, and the backup vehicle will not be far away. If somebody is unable to cycle at all, then the guides will arrange evacuation to

a vehicle.

### Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

We do not professionally vet your medical details. Please assess for yourself whether you are fit and able to take on the challenge. Please review the detailed Trip Notes and itinerary to get a better idea of what is involved. Please speak to your doctor or specialist if you have any concerns about taking part. If you suffer from a severe allergy, you are required to contact us to discuss any requirements. If you think that there are things we can do to make the challenge more accessible/comfortable for you, it is your responsibility to let us know, and we will then let you know if we can accommodate your request. Whilst we will do our best to put in place appropriate measures we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

### Medical Support

First Aid qualified staff will be provided with the medical details that you give on your booking form but please note that they are on the challenge to support with medical matters related to the challenge environment and terrain itself, i.e. heat/cold, high altitude and so on. They will deal with any incidents and accidents (cuts, sprains, breaks and so on). They are not intended to continue any ongoing specialist medical care that you receive in the UK for pre-existing medical conditions, and should not be assumed to have any professional experience of your specific medical condition.

If you have any specific needs around pre-existing medical conditions, you should discuss with your family doctor or specialist in advance and can discuss any advice given by them with the challenge leader or doctor.

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## Any more questions?

Contact us:

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